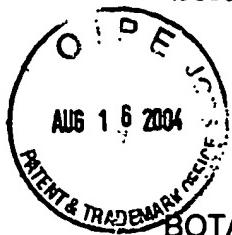


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NEW PLANT VARIETY OF ASTER TATARICUS  
NAMED 'BLUE LAKE BLIM'

BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION

*Aster tataricus* L. 'Blue Lake Blim'

5 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of *Aster tataricus* L. f., which was developed in a controlled breeding program in Kobuchizawa, Gumma Prefecture, Japan by Mr. Shoji Hatano. The varietal denomination of the new variety is 'Blue Lake Blim'.

10 The genus *Aster* is included in the family Compositae that comprises about 1,300 genera and 21,000 species of herbs, sometimes shrubs, or occasionally trees in tropics; mostly temperate in origin. *Aster* comprises approximately 250 species of mainly herbaceous perennials, though some annuals and biennials, originating in South America, Eurasia, Africa and Asia, many of which possess desirable ornamental characteristics.

15 *Aster tataricus* is an extremely variable clumping to rhizomatus perennial native to Japan, Korea, Manchuria, northern China, Mongolia and Siberia. It is typically about 2 meters tall.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

20 The new variety was discovered in a controlled breeding program and differs from its parents by its late spring to early summer bloom season, the distinct violet cast of its ray florets and its compactness, reaching a mature height of 40 to 50 cms tall in flower. *Aster tataricus* 'Blue Lake Blim' differs from *Aster tataricus* 'Blue Lake' (U.S. Plant Patent Applied For; Application #10/357,937; filed February 3, 2003) by being 25 20% shorter, blooming two weeks later and violet flower color. Asexual reproduction of the new variety by division and flower stem cuttings, performed in Kobuchizawa, Gumma Prefecture, Japan have confirmed that the distinctive characteristics of the new